

Binet News

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is to collect and distribute information regarding Bisexuality; to facilitate the development of Bisexual community and visibility; to work for the equal rights and liberation of Bisexuals and all oppressed peoples; and to eradicate all forms of oppression inside and outside the Bisexual community. We are committed to being affirmatively inclusive of a multicultural constituency and political agenda.

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Creating Change honors Boston Bi group

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Boston, Massachusetts. -- November 17, 1998 --The Bisexual Resource Center (BRC) has received the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Community Service Award, given for service to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered communities. This recognition marks the first time that a bisexual organization has won the prestigious award.

Kerry Lobel, NGLTF's Executive Director, presented the award to the Boston activists on Saturday, November 14, at the Creating Change Conference in Pittsburgh, recognizing the BRC's contributions in educating both the heterosexual and homosexual communities about bisexuality and other forms of sexual diversity. In her remarks she praised the wide variety of resources about bisexuality that the BRC provides, including the Bisexual Resource Guide, the www.biresource.org website, the phone, mail, and email information services, and speakers on bisexual issues. She acknowledged the BRC's success in building a strong community through hosting local support groups, organizing the watershed Fifth International Conference on Bisexuality this spring, and working in alliance with the Multicultural AIDS Coalition and the Fenway Community Health Center, and thanked the BRC for its efforts to further progressive social change.

"The Bisexual Resource Center is gratified to receive this award from NGLTF," responded Wayne Bryant, international conference organizer and author of *Bisexual Characters in Film: From Anais to Zee*. "The award shows how bisexual and transgender issues, and indeed issues of sexual freedom in general, are now being seen as core is-

sues by progressive national gay and lesbian rights groups. At the same time, it recognizes how much energy bisexual people have contributed to the advancement of human rights."

The Fifth International Conference on Bisexuality, held on the campus of Harvard University in early April, 1998, showcased the cultural diversity of the bisexual movement with over 140 different workshops, panels, and performances for bisexuals and their allies. Interest in the conference ran so high that a record 910 attendees arrived, 30% over the expected number, coming from fifteen different countries around the world. The BRC, in collaboration with BiNet USA, the Harvard Lesbian, Bisexual, and Gay Graduate Students, the Multicultural AIDS Coalition, and other organizations, organized a worldwide all-volunteer team to plan and host the conference. Organizers in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, are preparing to host the Sixth International Conference on Bisexuality in 2000.

Currently, BRC co-founder Robyn Ochs is leading another team of worldwide volunteers to complete the 1999 edition of the Bisexual Resource Guide, a 250-page publication listing contact information for all known bisexual and bi-inclusive organizations, groups, and internet resources worldwide. The Guide, which includes informative articles and listings of bisexual books and films, connects isolated bisexuals with a supportive community that respects and understands their sexuality. It is the only internationally-focused resource of its kind currently available. The new edition of the Bisexual Resource Guide [\$11.95 from BRC, PO Box 400639, Cambridge MA 02140] will be available in January 1999 and can be ordered now; see the BRC website at <http://www.biresource.org> for more details.

Previous recipients of NGLTF's Community Service Award have included Tim Gill, founder of Quark Software and the philanthropic Gill Foundation, Nina

Baehr and Genora Dancel, co-plaintiffs in the Hawaii marriage case, and the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission. Other recipients of this year's awards included Patricia Cramer, whose rural Pennsylvania bar (the Casa Nova) has been subject to continuous protests, harassment, and violent attacks by the KKK and other conservative groups for over a year, and the Audre Lorde Center in New York.

ABOUT THE BISEXUAL RESOURCE CENTER

Founded in 1985 and based in Boston, Massachusetts, the Bisexual Resource Center is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to providing information and educational resources about bisexuality to interested parties worldwide. The BRC publishes the Bisexual Resource Guide and other educational material, supplies information through phone, email, and mail, and maintains a website of extensive resources at <http://www.biresource.org>. In addition to the Fifth International Conference on Bisexuality, the Center has hosted six regional conferences on bisexuality and three BiFests since 1984. The BRC hosts social and support groups in Boston to serve the local bisexual community, and provides speakers willing to talk with organizations about bisexuality and bisexual issues.

Look for Complete Creating Change Reports in the January Binet News

Topic O' The month: Coming Out

The "Coming Out" of Bisexual Culture

I am proud of our Bi-activists. People like Loraine Hutchins, who are not afraid to stand up at political meetings and say, "What about Bisexuals?" Those breakthrough voices have earned us the space we have now. That said, I can't help thinking that many of our current problems with visibility can be solved if we work on ourselves and our community. How could a mainstream national gay organization ignore us if we have more members than they do? How could the gay press discount us if our magazines and our publications had a larger readership than theirs? If Bisexual culture grows like we all suspect, hope and dream it could, then many of our current problems would just shrivel up in the face of it. So a question I feel we need to address is "What is Bisexual culture?" Or rather, "What can we do to stimulate Bisexual culture?" Here are a few suggestions:

It's About Sex...

I remember a time at one of our local support groups, when we worked hard to *not* talk about sex for fear that it would scare people off. There was always the concern that if we were overtly

sexual people would feel uncomfortable or, worse, we might be mistaken for a "swingers group." What we have discovered over time, though, is that many members of our group were really interested in sexual topics. Nights where we had a racy topic scheduled were always well attended. For some people it is because they have to work through things. Others are simply titillated by it and just enjoy talking about it. Whatever the case, sexual expression and a certain sexual openness certainly seem to be part of Bisexuality for most people. In this regard, here are a couple of things we can do:

Ask for Bi Movies - If you watch pornography and you are brave enough to talk to the video store manager about it, ask for more Bi films. Other people may see them, rent them and discover a few things about themselves.

Educate Yourself about Sexuality - Know what the Kinsey Scale is? Know how the Klein Scale is different? People who are comfortable enough around you to ask questions will have many. Become an Expert!

...But Sometimes It Isn't

Obviously there's more to Bisexual Culture than just sex. The problem is these less salacious elements are underdeveloped. Here are a few things we should work on:

Read the Classics - Everyone should own a copy of *Bi Any Other Name*, *Bisexual Politics*, the *Bi Resource Guide*... These are the writings of the sages of our culture.

Subscribe to "Anything That Moves" - Increase its readership and help move it from the Bisexual's coffee table to the mall bookstore magazine rack.

Write Bi Poetry - and stories and songs. Send them to magazines, post them on the web, staple them to the church bulletin board...

Setup "Bi-space" - Pick a place, coffeehouse, bar, etc. and gather there regularly. Turn it into a "known Bisexual hangout."

What else would you add to these lists? Write BiNet News and tell us!

-Jon Spinner

BinetUSA National Coordinator

BinetUSA

WINTER'S TOPIC O' THE MONTH - FAMILY

In honor of the holiday season, the next global topic is "family"- partners, friends, kids. Some people have a partner, some more than one, and some people (believe it or not) lead perfectly satisfactory lives without a significant other. Some people have a strong community of friends... or have close relationships with their traditional families.. Tell us about your family. Submissions should be 500 words, either emailed (wendyc@binetusa.org), mailed on floppy disk (Wendy Curry 95 West Clarke st #29 Manchester, NH 03104). Submissions should be received no later than January 2, 1999.

Coming Out Tales

I am continually amazed by the power of coming out stories. By that I'm not referring to the act of coming out itself. It's certainly easy to see how that is an awesome and important step for someone. No, I'm referring to the stories themselves and the power they hold. Coming out stories are a great source of validation and healing for the individual. Clearly, the act of coming out itself is a tremendous experience. One that can be very powerful and liberating. But the stories told afterwards are also part of the process. Stories of success and triumph celebrate the human spirit and reaffirm

what was gained. Stories of misery and misfortune can heal in their telling too as they mark the distance in time from the event.

I love coming out stories because they are great fodder for discussion at support group meetings. Whenever things get a little slow I can nudge the group leader, Gary, and ask him to come out again. The beauty of coming out stories is that every activist I know has at least one good one. A lot of people have quite a few ranging in intensity from serious stories of hurt and fear, to those with parents slamming doors in their faces, to those with caring parents struggling to understand, to those whose friends roll their eyes and say "Please, we knew it all along, probably even before you did." Bisexual people, especially the older ones, are exceptional in this regard because many of them have two sets of coming out stories, one set from when they came out as gay and another set, often surreal and chaotic, from when they came out as Bi. Actually, that's why it is especially good for a Bisexual person to come out. One of the reasons that many Bi-coming out stories are so bizarre is be-

cause modern society is still developing a cultural frame of reference for them. Whether they like it or not (or whether they choose to recognize it or not) a parent has a pretty clear idea of what homosexuality is. There have been enough gay people on morning talk shows and evening news tabloids shows to insure that. But coming out as Bi often generates a lot of squinting and questions about potential grandchildren. Bi-coming out stories are great for support groups because every individual story adds to the greater story of "What is Bisexuality?" They allow the

listener to compare their experience, rejoice in the similarities and contemplate the differences.

Just look at their structure. Every coming out story has a plot: *This is how I came out.* Nearly every story has a climax: *When Dad asked me why the second bedroom didn't have a bed, I knew it was time.* And all of those have a denouement: *Now Mom is president of the local PFLAG chapter and she keeps sending letters to the national office telling them to stick a "B" and a "T" in there somewhere.* There is almost always a moral to the story whether it's: *Come out and the birds will sing and the skies will open up and rain comfort upon you,* or, *When you tell your mother that you probably won't ever get legally married make sure that she isn't holding anything sharp.* They all follow the traditional story structure of a hero on a great vision quest. Joseph Campbell often talked about the power of myth and how societies were constantly retelling the great stories, adjusting them to the current context. Now Persephone will have to tell the cabal of radical Lesbian feminists that she wants to spend half of the year dating men

and Jason will have to slay the multi-headed hydra where each head has the face of a member of his fundamentalist Christian family.

The stories themselves, pleasant or unpleasant, are the entry fee into queer society for most people. But, more than that, they are part of our culture. As Bisexuals we need to start spinning our tales and legends. We need to tell our Bisexual stories so that those people who are struggling to get their family to understand can point and say "Look, I'm like that person." We need to tell our Bisexual stories so that someone's tight circle of gay friends can relax and realize that bisexuality doesn't threaten their existence. We need to tell our Bisexual stories to reaffirm for ourselves that bisexuality is not just our choice, but our good, viable, and legitimate choice.

- Jon Spinner
NC, BinetUSA
High Tech Guru



This is not Jon

Coming Out to Your Fedex Goddess

Well kids, its that time again. A nip is in the air and cries of "Come out! Come out! Where ever you are!" are everywhere.

I truly believe in coming out - for bisexuals more than anyone. In this monosexual world, you are assumed straight if you're with a man; a lesbian if you're with a woman. You practically have to have sex on Main Street with more than one gender before someone thinks the "b" word. Then, you're just one of those kinky perverts.

True, it will be a beautiful day on this planet when no one cares - when you can just be yourself and that's enough. But until that day, the best thing I can do is let my family, friends, coworkers know that the person across from them at lunch is bisexual... Maybe I can add one more shade to their definition.

OK, end of sermon. This isn't about why you should come out; there will plenty of that elsewhere. My big problem this year is: who to come out to. I've done the work thing, the friend thing, the family thing. My house is practically a shrine to all that is bi. My office has rainbow balloons, pins, bumper stickers, yada, yada.

But I'm not done by far. I

could tell my dad... But that would require forcing him to decide between his psycho homophobic religion and me. And, h 6is prone to violence.... Ok, admit it - I'm a wimp! I'm not ready to risk that relationship quite yet. Right now, we're doing the "don't ask, don't tell" policy. As long as no words are shared, I can have all the bi stuff in my house. He still hasn't forgiven me for voting for Clinton!

I could tell the in-laws, but they've both just had double bypasses and I don't want to be held responsible for the next heart attacks. There's no one else in the family to tell (they all know). Lets see, friends? Everyone knows. Its a rite of passage in any friendship. Coworkers? My entire office (all 6 of us) knows. The home office half knows. I suppose I could send out an *all@company* email, but that seems kinda extreme.

I know! My Fedex goddess! She brings me stuff at least once a week. We chitchat a bit. We've made eye contact. She's even smiled at me. That's a relationship, right? Maybe its the uniform, but she seems dykey. Who knows, maybe she'll drop to her knees and express her undying lust for me. She'll break down and beg me to

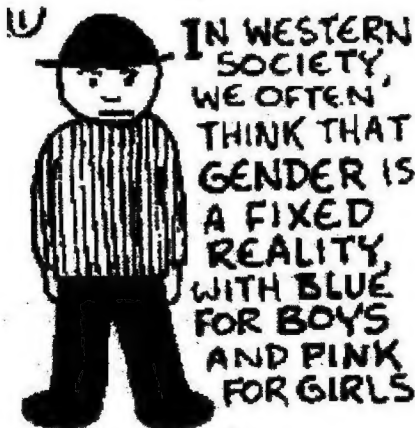
marry her. She'll offer me the world.

Or maybe she'll be one of those biphobic types. Maybe she'll spit in my eye and tell me to die a slow painful death. What if she stops delivering my mail? What if she conveniently loses anything addressed to me? Or worse, what if she's the Unabomber's second cousin? What if, in her deep hostility-ridden obsession, she decides to build a bomb that will make me die a slow, painful death? Will I ever be able to open another package delivered by her? Who in my office could I get to do the dirty deed for me? I'd be given the task of deciding who will die and who will live, all because of this womyn's biphobia! Its too much to risk.

My postal carrier, on the other hand; she can only deliver packages the size of a magazine. Maybe we should talk...

-Wendy Curry
Activist Wanna be

Cartoon Guide to Gender (Part 1) by norrie mAy-welby



A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, IT WAS PINK FOR BOYS AND BLUE FOR GIRLS, FOR THE THINGS THAT WE MAY ATTRIBUTE TO GENDER VARY FROM TIME TO TIME



Look for part 2 of CGG in the January Issue!

Full cartoon available at:

<http://www-personal.usyd.edu.au/~sfraser/cat/ultra/ultra5.html>

POLICY INSTITUTE OF THE NATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN TASK FORCE CONVENES HISTORIC STRATEGY MEETING

NATIONAL GAY AND LESBIAN
TASK FORCE PRESS RELEASE

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Following A Summer of Unprecedented Attacks, America's National Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Organizations Unite to Hold Historic Strategy Meeting

"The discussions begun at this meeting were exciting and will inform legislative and legal strategies for years to come."

-- Urvashi Vaid, Director, Director of the Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

Washington, DC -- September 23, 1998 -- Leaders of 31 national, policy-oriented, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) organizations and associations held an historic meeting of the National Policy Roundtable on September 17-18, 1998 in Washington DC. The Executive Directors discussed strategies to meet the challenges presented by an increasingly shrill and hostile right.

This was the third meeting of the National Policy Roundtable, which is a semi-annual meeting

of executive directors and leaders of national GLBT groups sponsored by the Policy Institute, a think tank inside NGLTF dedicated to research, policy analysis and strategy development. "The meeting presents executive directors with a forum for the creative and strategic thinking which is the basis of united action.

It is a meeting designed to stimulate discussion of new ideas, and is not a decision-making body. The discussions begun at this meeting were exciting and will inform legislative and legal strategies for years to come," said Urvashi Vaid, Director of the Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

The directors heard presentations and held discussions on four topics: (1) the 1998 elections; (2) the origins of sexual orientation and the impact of that debate on public policy; (3) the right wing's ideology and strategy; and (4) race and the leadership of the national movement organizations.

Noting his surprise at the high level of agreement at the meeting, Rich Tafel, Executive Director of National Log Cabin Republican Clubs commented, "The meeting's unity of purpose was striking. Groups from ACT UP to transgender organizations to legal groups to Log Cabin Re-

publicans found common ground on a variety of hot topics. When there was disagreement there remained mutual respect and a realization that our opponents are the religious right, not each other."

A thoughtful and disturbing presentation was made by GLBT political organizations including NGLTF, the Human Rights Campaign, Stonewall Democrats, the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund, and Log Cabin on the November elections. Summarizing the mixed potential of this fall's elections, Victory Fund Executive Director Brian Bond noted that this could be an historic year as three openly lesbian candidates could win seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, but that the Clinton controversy could bring in a tidal wave of new Republicans, some GLBT supportive, others not.

- Chip Berlet and Surina Khan, of Political Research Associates, a think tank which monitors movements of the right, challenged the directors to better understand the ideology of the American right wing. After a vigorous set of conversations, Joan Garry, Executive Director of the Gay and Lesbian

Matthew Sheppard

Binet Press Release

Contact: Kris Roehling,

CLIMATE OF HATE MUST END

BiNet USA adds its voice to the choir of outrage surrounding the recent brutal hate crime perpetrated against Matthew Sheppard in Wyoming. People of conscience everywhere share the horror of this savage murder. However, the national advocacy network of and for bisexuals in the US believes this crime should not be viewed in isolation.

"The climate of hate, fear and misunderstanding regarding people who identify as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered contributes to these attacks," said Jon Spinner, National Coordinator for BiNet USA. National leaders of the GLBT community and their supporters have continued to assert that recent full-page national ads are filled with misinformation perpetuate a climate of intolerance. Radically right Christian organizations have added insult to injury through their statements on this issue. By carefully asserting that their

condemnation of the violence in no way means that they accept homosexuality, they have nullified their original message and left the citizenry with the tacit acceptance of hatred against members and supporters of the GLBT community.

The passage of federal, state and local hate crimes legislation would send a clear message to such hate mongers that civilized society will not tolerate such biased, targeted violence. BiNet USA joins other organizations across the country calling for our members and supporters to contact their legislative representatives and demand passage of legislation like the Hate Crimes Prevention Act.

BiNet USA is a national organization of by and for Bisexual people and their allies. BiNet USA collects and distributes information regarding bisexuality, and works for the equal rights and liberation of bisexual. We are committed to being affirmatively inclusive of a multicultural constituency and political agenda. For more information on BiNet USA and Bisexual issues, visit the BiNet USA web site at www.binetusa.org

Contact your Senator and voice your opinion on the Hate Crimes Prevention act. A list of Senators and their email addresses is available at <http://www.senate.gov/senator/state.html>

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In the news: Bi/Trans Hate Crimes

OHIO -- The gay community has been shaken (*binet ed. - the bisexual community was equally shaken*) by Sunday's beating and strangulation of Michael J. Carpenter of Clermont County, Lycette Nelson, executive director of Stonewall Cincinnati, said Wednesday.

Police have confirmed through interviews that Mr. Carpenter spent the evening in a gay bar in downtown Cincinnati, said Union Township Sgt. Mike McMillan.

"The victim, although he was married for 12 years, was bisexual," said Sgt. McMillan. "The victim did frequent gay bars."

Patrick Cooney, an employee at Shooter's on Race Street, said he recognized an investigator's photo of Mr. Carpenter as a customer, but did not know him.

Maria Carpenter, his wife, returned home from work about 11p.m. Sunday and found her 42-year-old husband dead and naked on the bedroom floor, his face bloody and his hands tied behind his back with a sock.

There was no sign of forced entry into the Carpenters' Southern Trace Apartment on Picadilly Square Drive, Sgt. McMillan said. Several items of jewelry, including wedding rings, and Mr. Carpenter's wallet were taken.

- *The Cincinnati Enquirer*

VERMONT -- An on-going feud in the tiny town of Victory cranked up a notch when the town clerk found a picture of herself with a bullet hole in her head, a slit throat, and the caption, "Death to queers."

The Vermont State Police are investigating the case that began Aug. 31, when Ilene Kanoff found the photo on a bulletin board when she arrived at Town Hall for a meeting.

This summer someone started crossing out the word clerk on town signs that referred to her office and replaced it with queer.

"I think part of this is attention-seeking," she said. "I felt the less I said about it, the better. I just let it go."

But the photo, which was clipped from a newspaper story about Kanoff's Getting her motorcycle license, scared her. "There is an implicit line between harassing and threatening," she said.

She said there were probably five people in town who could be responsible for the photo. One of them refers to Kanoff out of earshot as "the queer," Kanoff said.

The former Massachusetts state government employee freely admits she is a bisexual but says she didn't expect to find bias in Vermont. And outside of Victory, she hasn't, she said.

Kanoff, a feature reporter for St. Johnsbury's Caledonian Record newspaper, published an opinion piece on her experience Oct. 12, the same day that Matthew Shepard, the gay Wyoming college student, died from a hate-related beating. "That helped bring some awareness" to her situation, she said.

- *Boston Globe*

WASHINGTON -- Tyra Hunter, a pre-operative transsexual who was the victim of a horrific August 1995 car accident, spent her last moments of life being the object of bigotry, ridicule and blatant medical incompetence, a 12-member Superior Court jury was told Wednesday in Washington.

City refuses to accept responsibility for bigoted paramedic.

The Washington Post reports lawyers for Hunter's mother related how Tyra was pulled from her car bleeding and unconscious by witnesses and then refused treatment for a time when district paramedics discovered a man beneath the injured woman's clothes.

Court documents show that during the rescue attempt Hunter was called a "bitch" and that treatment was stopped for five to seven minutes. An internal investigation was halted when Hunter's mother filed a lawsuit against the D.C. Fire Department in late 1995. The Post reports no rescue workers have been disciplined over the incident.

- GLBT News

MARYLAND -- Three hundred people turned out for a rally in Baltimore, Maryland November 6 at the site of the hate shooting of cross-dresser Lynn (Leonard) Vines. Vines somehow survived being shot six times -- twice in the arm, twice in the chest, once in the back, and once in the shoulder -- on October 28 by one of a group of perhaps 20 young men and women who were commenting about not allowing any "drag queen faggot bitches" on their street.

It was the neighborhood Vines had grown up in, and he was visiting his cousin at the time to pick up the key to an apartment he was thinking of renting, but as he tried to explain this and repeated that he didn't want any trouble, one young man struck him in the face. When Vines tried to run away, someone carrying a cane used it to trip him. "I heard someone say, 'Mike, shoot the bitch,' and the next thing I knew, I was shot in the chest, and I went into shock," Vines said. After the shooting, the young people left the scene while Vines was bleeding on his cousin's stairs, but luckily a paramedic in a nearby fire station heard the shots, took off in an ambulance and Vines' cousin flagged down. Vines spent a week in the hospital and faces a lengthy period of recovery before he can return to his work as a housecleaner and drag entertainer. Police are looking for the suspect, Paul Bishop, to charge him with attempted first-degree murder under a warrant issued November 5.

The rally, called the "Take Back the Street Rally and End the Violence Candlelight Vigil," was organized by the Free State Justice Campaign with Vines' aunt, Beverly Vines, to call for passage of hate crimes legislation to include homophobic acts.

- from GLBT-news

A MEMORIAL VIGIL FOR MATTHEW SHEPPARD

THURSDAY OCTOBER 15, 1998

By Warren J. Blumenfeld

I never met Matthew Shepard in life, but I feel I know Matthew Shepard in death. His passing hit me like the death of an old trusted friend. His loss to me is palpable.

Matthew hoped to dedicate his life to advancing the cause of human rights for all people. His uncle, R. W. Eaton, said that Matt was "a small person with a big heart, mind, and soul that someone tried to beat out of him."

I come to you tonight with both good news and bad news, and I will save the good news to the end. The bad news is that what happened to Matthew Shepard is nothing new. We see hate-motivated violence against gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people and other targeted social groups on the rise. Pick up any of our publications and each week you will see stories of brutal and senseless attacks. Groups of young males wielding baseball bats and guns at anyone who looks "different," and men waiting outside women's spaces attacking women on their way home. Recently hitting the national spotlight we witnessed the brutal attacks on Rodney King in Los Angeles, the barbarous slaying of James Byrd, Jr. in Jasper, Texas, and the fierce rape and murder of a 7-year-old girl in a Las Vegas casino bathroom.

And these are simply the most extreme examples of hate-related violence in general and so-called "gay bashing" specifically. I am here, then, to restate a simple truth — the killers of Matthew Shepard live in a society that promotes intolerance, for gay bashing comes in a great many forms:

Whenever hate mongers like Fred Phelps and his followers threaten to picket and protest the funerals of gay and lesbian people, including Matthew Shepard, and people who have died of

AIDS, that's gay bashing.

Whenever university students, like those at Colorado State University, spray paint a scarecrow at their homecoming parade with vicious epithets in reference to Matthew Shepard, that's gay bashing.

Whenever the political and theocratic right produce newspaper and television ads that promise "conversion" and "escape" from the so-called "homosexual lifestyle" in the guise of Christian love and understanding, that's gay bashing.

Whenever politicians like Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott proclaim in the media that homosexuality is a disease in the categories of kleptomania and alcoholism, that's gay bashing.

Whenever the U.S. Senate and other legislative bodies refuse to confirm a nominee for public service, like James Hormel as ambassador to Luxembourg, simply on account of their sexual or gender identity alone and not on their actual qualifications, that's gay bashing.

Whenever so-called religious leaders like Pat Robertson blame natural disasters on city governments that have enacted laws protecting the rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people, that's gay bashing.

Whenever mainstream religious denominations condemn homosexuality with one breath and actively obstruct frank and honest sexuality and AIDS education programs in our schools with another, that's gay bashing.

Whenever any young person is tossed out on the street when family members become aware of their sexual or gender identity, that's gay bashing.

Whenever any person is ridiculed, isolated, confronted, or attacked for not conforming to rigid constructions of gender expression, that's gay bashing.

Whenever hate crimes legislation is drafted without including the documentation of violence directed against

lesbians, gay males, bisexuals, and transgender people, branding this as nothing more than the granting of "special rights," that's gay bashing.

Whenever professors in our universities and teachers in our schools exclude the stories of our lives, our experiences, and our accomplishments in the classroom, that's gay bashing.

Whenever any one of us is taught to hate ourselves each one of us is demeaned, and that certainly is gay bashing, and we have a right, or rather an obligation, to speak up, to fight back with all the energy, with all the unity, and with all the love that we are capable of.

Today we still live in a society that proclaims we don't have a right to exist, but exist we do, everywhere, in all walks of life.

For as we all know, we are the students, professors, teachers, guidance counselors, day care workers, parents — and still some people and groups attempt to prevent us from having contact with the young people of our nation. And because of their insensitivity and fear, the gay bashing continues.

We are the social workers, psychiatrists, workers at homeless shelters and rape crisis centers — and still some people and groups blame us for the break up of what they call the "traditional American family." And the gay bashing continues.

The reality is that we are holding up this culture. If all the lesbians, bisexuals, gay males, and transgender people suddenly left our jobs, this country would literally crumble.

Referring to Matthew Shepard's shattered body, his uncle cried: "It's like something you might see in war." Yes, we are fighting a war: a war

(continued on Page 19)

A few words from Lorraine...

Hi beloveds,

I have been thinking lately about how the media creates and frames news – what catches our attention and what doesn't, depending on how we get info and how it's presented, spun, repeated and distributed, or not, etc.

Why?

Consider this --

1. Matthew Shepard's death is indeed tragic but it is hardly the first queer killing. He was not killed in the process of having sex (at least not that we know of), like many gay hate crimes happen and he was white and middle class, college-educated, so his death becomes A People Magazine narrative that many mainstream non-queer folk can sympathize with/identify with. Meanwhile many sex workers and people of color (queer or not) are victims of hate crimes just as horrific repeatedly and it doesn't capture the national/global attention the way this incident did. (I call this My Polly-Klaus/Lady Di Theory Of Collective Mourning versus things "we don't care about or know about..."-(w/ apologies to all Lady Di-lovers and parents who identified w/ Polly Klaus's kidnapping and murder in Calif. several years ago...)

2. There was a major police riot Monday nite in NYC in which 120+folk were arrested,

and NOT because they intended to be in a CD action. It

Happened in the wake of a Memorial March down 5th Avenue for Matthew Shepard and many people were beaten up. It was a second Stonewall. One of those arrested in the first Stonewall, Sylvia Rodriguez, a drag queen, was jailed again. My faculty advisor, lesbian poet Minnie Bruce Pratt was jailed. So was her lover Leslie Feinberg. And so were gay men in suits from Wall Street who didn't expect to get caught up in this and many queers and others of all ages and races. The police beat up folk. They had horses And riot gear. There was fighting between demonstrators and police for hours for blocks. Minnie Bruce sez they were held in jail for over 24 hours, just got out. She is posting a lot about this. You will see it soon.

AND THERE WAS NOT ONE WORD ABOUT THIS IN THE WASHINGTON POST THIS MORNING.

It is as if it never happened.

3. An African woman studying in Alabama, Catherine Mutheki, 20 years old, from Kenya, was lynched (it appears) last week and had called friends a week before in the middle of the night, terrified, saying she felt her

Life was being threatened. The local officials are saying she killed Herself and trying to stop

the newsmedia from covering it. They even tried to cremate her body before her family could receive it. There is at least

An organized Amnesty-type effort around this which you can find out about by contacting Martin White at MSWNY@aol.com (I heard about it on the net through a black lesbian friend of mine)

My point w/these three examples -- people are rising up and making the connections and we just need to keep getting the word out and carefully, caringly organizing with each other to make social change happen. We ARE making a difference, we really don't know how much. There is, I think, a concerted, inter-racial, cross-issues movement against violence building in this country and in other countries around the world, which we don't know the dimensions of yet. But believing in ourselves and each other helps make us strong! Tonite there is another organizing meeting in NYC to plan a March Against Police Brutality in NYC tomorrow. And the beat goes on.

Stay connected, stay aware, keep acting, get away from your computer occasionally and go meet with people in person and consult. We will make it happen!

Lorraine

- Lorraine Hutchin is a kick ass activist and co-editor of *Bi Any Other Name*"

Movie Reviews: "Reel Affirmations"

Hopefully, many of you caught this year's "reel affirmations" film festival. This was DC's eighth gay and lesbian festival. If you happened to miss it, hopefully friends will fill you in on some of their favorite highlights. And hopefully you will be more fortunate next year.

There were so many good films to choose from. It was impossible to see all of them. I chose two, with the help of friends. On Saturday, I ran into Gar, after the Matthew Shepard Memorial at St. Margaret's. Over shakes at Larry's, we decided to see what was playing at Lincoln Theater. We actually started walking that way, then stopped at Franklin's to pick up a Directory and check listings and times.

Gar behaved himself, but I think I added a decadent coffee mocha to the earlier sins at Larry's. The timing was right to run right over and see "Sixth Happiness." Although, after the shake at Larry's and a Hazelnut-flavored-whipped-cream-topped, dark-chocolate mocha at Franklin's, for me it was more of a waddle than a run.

"Sixth Happiness," directed by Waris Hussein, is the film version of a book Firdaus Kanga wrote about his own life as a person physically disabled from birth. It takes place in Bombay, India and provides some wonderful non-commercial images of life in Bombay that dispelled many less positive images that I had previously held. The treatment of the relationships between members of his family, and their friends is similarly full of richness and warmth while including enough light cynicism and a forgiving portrayal of natural faults to make the characters "real." While his intimate relationships are very much a part of this movie, the tension of his father's efforts to cope with his disabilities are probably of more impact. This makes a film that portrays Firdaus's sensuality—something we do not always include in our assessment of physically impaired people—with great integrity. It is natural, matter-of-course, and maintains a wonderful balance with other life-themes in the movie, with which the viewer may readily iden-

tify.

A particularly pleasant surprise, to Gar and me, was the similar treatment of bisexuality in the movie. The reviews had said nothing about bisexual themes, so this was a major bonus, for us. It seemed very propitious that the first movie we chose to see touched upon the topic so well.

A week later, I went to see "Our Private Idaho," at the Jewish Community Center. A friend from Centering Prayer joined me. This movie was an easy choice, as I moved from Wyoming to Idaho when I was in the 6th grade.

In the years that followed, my awareness of sexuality; my personal growth, or lack of growth; my thinking, healthy or otherwise; was developed in the context that life in Idaho gives such subjects. It is one of the things from which I feel I am still recovering; aren't we all recovering from our youth in some way?!

"Our Private Idaho" should not be confused with an early movie: "My Private Idaho." This movie is a documentary. It covers the struggle against efforts of the religious right (which is neither) to win a legislative toe-hold in Idaho. Basically, they financed a petition drive to put Proposition One on Idaho's 1994 ballot. This proposition would have banned the discussion of homosexuality in classrooms, required libraries to set up separate rooms to hold materials that include the subject, and would have explicitly allowed business owners to discriminate against employees and employee-applicants based on sexual practices and preferences. The proposition was narrowly defeated, and the immoral minority (calling them what they call themselves is too much like speaking propaganda akin to Hitler's 'big lie' principal) has not been able to generate much interest since. While one may be saddened to see the margin so narrow, the defeat, nonetheless, was a testimony to basic human decency. Moreover, it greatly undermines the notion that religious conservatives try to perpetuate that they are a predominant, undefeatable influence. This was a key conservative issue being tested in a state known for its conservative values. What we may also see in this movie is the notion that true conservatives, many of whom probably do not understand or agree with homosexual behavior, agree less with politics that exploit

fears (homophobia), and agree less with overbearing political intrusion into private life.

We were pleased to learn that the Director, Daniel Gallagher, was in the audience. He stayed after the movie and a number of us were able to chat with him. One further point he made was how the "civility" of the discussion was almost scary. While arguments and verbal attacks were often quite hateful as irreligious—"wrong" proponents came face to face with civil-rights proponents at places like on Boise Capitol steps, there was no noticeable violence and few instances of personal harassment.

He asked those of us who were from Idaho if we would consider going back to live in Idaho. Except for the fact that I like my current work it was a bit tempting. I do like hunting and fishing (he responded that the hunting

And fishing stuff must be the Bi blood in me!). Certainly many Idahoans showed that they were among the best in the nation at thinking for themselves. Wouldn't it be great if the rest of the country gave such considered responses to the elements of the extreme-right?

The documentary was fairly short—only 32 minutes. The festival planners supplemented it with "Out at Work," a longer documentary that told true stories of people encountering discrimination in the workplace. There were some encouraging accounts of success, but suffice it to say that anybody who feels queer people are as entitled to equal dignity and respect as anyone else; anybody who holds such convictions will do well to avoid eating at The Cracker Barrel. You might spread the word, as well. It may be common knowledge to some, but no one had told me this story before.

The short feature prior to the movie, "The New Facts of Life," directed by Eliza Star Byard and Florence Fradeliza, featured the stories of gay parents. It was very up beat. Clearly, progress is being made and much is owed to our pioneers.

Well, that's it for reviews this time around. If others can share what they got out of some other movies, I'd appreciate it.

- JB. Fields
RO, Mid-Atlantic Region

Review: Haynes Hits Gold with Velvet Goldmine

When a movie starts with "history, like ancient ruins, is the fictions of empires", you know you're in for quite a tale. In this case, you're in for a fairy tale. "Velvet Goldmine" is the story of fictional bisexual "glam" rocker Brian Slade (Jonathan Rhys Meyers). Slade, a Bowie clone, emerges in response to the hypocrisy of the peace and love hippie movement. He put the sex back in sexuality, questions the gender polarity, sells himself as a boy toy.

The story is told through the eyes of people who knew him. Mandy, his ex-wife, (brilliantly portrayed by Toni Collette - Muriel's Wedding, Così), evolves from a British Claudette Colbert wanna-be party girl, to shrewish wife, to glam grrl, to burnt out lounge lizard. She tells of excess, passion, love, drugs, and abandon. She maintains a level of love and awe ("we were all living our dreams, but you see they all went away").

Curt Wild (Ewan McGregor) is a Curt Colbain-ish glam rocker. The love between he and Slade is one seldom portrayed convincingly. Slade first sees him at a concert, prancing around naked, doing a simulated masturbation scene with a glitter shaker. Wild has a tough life, starting with multiple electrical shock treatments meant to remove his "poof" tendency, leaving him slightly psychotic. An addiction to heroin cements

his legacy of craziness. Mandy explains his success by saying "when you're abused like that, you know you've touched the stars". Throughout his cycle of chaos, explosions of anger, they're love grows. He tells Slade, "the crimes of your lips rewrite history".

Although Velvet Goldmine depicts a mostly bi positive utopia (guaranteed by executive Producer Michael Stipe), it does have its biphobic moments. Wild tells the media (about his fans), "...everyone is bisexual. Personally, I think that's meaningless" and "it doesn't count until you do it; many of them (fans) can't".

The narrator Arthur (Christian Bale) goes through a tough time - the terror of buying his first Slade album, a slight rejection of peers when he first goes out in his glam garb, violence at his dad's hand when caught masturbating to a Slade/Wild picture, ousting from his home - he ends up at a better place - as part of an entourage of glam rockers (the flaming creatures). He beds a rock star, comes to terms with his identity, gets a great job.

There are too many quotes to fit in a single column: "The meaning is not in things

but in between them", "camp is not just a row of tents", "Jack discovered that there were others like him - singled out from a great gift and one day the whole stinking world would be theirs", "we set out to change the world, but ended up just changing ourselves. What's wrong with that? Nothing, if you don't look at the world", "strange people are chosen and through them we can make progress more quickly", "I like boys, I like girls, they're all great - no difference is there, Mr BBC?"

Although the world was destructive, a "spiral into decadence", it nevertheless left me with a feeling of hope. For one moment in history, no matter how short, we could look as we want, love who we want, surround ourselves with others like ourselves. If it was possible once...

I walked out of the theater elated. Then the world slowly reappeared - homeless looking for money, cars beeping every where, people pushing, yelling, glaring at each other. I turned heel, bought another ticket and waited for the next show.

-Wendy Curry has listened to nothing but the Velvet Goldmine soundtrack for 6 days

MICHAEL STIPE... Bisexual REM singer Michael Stipe comes out and says, "I don't think there's been an acceptance of homosexuality or queerness on a mass scale in this country to start with," Stipe told MTV News. "It's one thing when it's entertainment based, when it's Ellen or someone like myself, who's presenting, you know, a very different side to entertainment. If it's something that can be categorized by television, or music, or the arts, but in day to day, I would say the homophobia still exists."

(from BiBull: a media report - September 1998)

New Journal of Bisexuality: Call for papers and information

I am happy to announce that Haworth Press will begin publishing a new journal, "Journal of Bisexuality". The first issue should appear in about one year.

Haworth Press has been a leader in publishing journals and books devoted to gay and lesbian themes. They now feel that a separate journal for bisexual issues is needed. I have accepted being editor and though it will require a lot of work I know that with all of your help it will be a huge success.

The first job is to pick an editorial board which I have already begun.

The second task is to obtain articles from all bisexual writers, and researchers. This will be an interdisciplinary journal and all types of articles will be accepted from social commentary, new

bisexual research, international doings, special bisexual topics, etc. It is planned that the readership will be an educated layman rather than aiming it for specialists.

One good place to start is to make sure that anyone who is doing a dissertation (either for a master or Ph.D. level) should contact me and we'll work together on making sure it sees the light of day. Another good source for articles would be anyone who has an interest in aspecial

field of bisexuality such as married couples, religion, mixed marriages, media, community history, etc. should contact me about doing an article.

I made this announcement at the Bi-West/SoCal Bi Conference at the end of October and two people already have

expressed an interest in writing for the journal.

This is an excellent opportunity for the Bisexual community to be heard. This journal will be placed in most libraries and universities.

How good it will be that bisexual issues will be treated on its own and not be a tail to other orientations. If you have any suggestions, advice, or wish to write an article, please contact me at: Fritz Klein, M.D.

4545 Park Blvd. #207

San Diego, CA 92116

Tel: (619) 542-0088

Fax: (619) 542-0006

e-mail: FritzKlein@aol.com

- Fritz Klein

Father of the Klein Scale

Author, The Bisexual Option

BinetUSA's Multicultural Initiative

After a period of inactivity, efforts are now underway to increase diversity education within BiNet and to do more multicultural outreach and coalition building. As an initial step, a rapid response team was formed following the brutal murder of James Byrd in Jasper, Texas to enable BiNet to speak out quickly and forcefully on racial issues and to help us work more effectively with other groups to protest instances of racial oppression. At the national BiNet meeting in April, three of us met in a small group to discuss multiculturalism and generated a number of concrete short-term proposals that we felt were critical for the whole group to address. These proposals were expanded upon at the RO retreat. Now we just need people who are willing to work on them!

I list the proposals below. If you are willing to help out, please contact me. I will facilitate communication between people who want to contribute in the same area. I hope we can generate some energy and involvement to be able to show a few accomplishments between now and the next national meeting.

Brett Beemyn

Multicultural Initiative contact

brett_beemyn@ccmail.wiu.edu

Multicultural Proposals

1. Create and publicize a travel fund for the Arizona meeting to help people attend
2. Work to make sure the annual meeting is accessible for people with disabilities (ADA compliance, ASL interpreters)
3. Do outreach to people with disabilities in Arizona and beyond

about the annual meeting

4. Do outreach to communities of color in Arizona and beyond about the annual meeting; consider co-sponsoring an event the weekend of the annual meeting with a local people of color org.
5. Translate BiNet materials into Braille, Spanish
6. Decide on and run articles on race and white privilege in the newsletter and ATM
7. Develop and conduct multicultural trainings at national/regional/local events
8. Develop a proposal for the Arizona meeting to increase the representation of people of color in leadership positions (targetted RO slots?)
9. Create ally relationships with groups serving primarily people of color
10. Other??

Regional News...

The Northeast Region, consisting of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont and Rhode Island, has lots of events happening as we speak.

We just recently held a members meeting, at which some of the details discussed are below. And we are planning another for April of '99. That meeting will be a day long get together with a morning of BiNet business and discussion and an afternoon of selected workshops to be announced.

Keep your eye on our calendar at the binet usa website, where we will be posting updates including happenings in your state, and keep your eye on your mail box for information which we will be sending on a bimonthly basis to members in the region.

Anyone wishing to get information

on that April '99 meeting, get involved in the planning, or just chat with some people in your region can contact us through: BiNet, 45 State St., Montpelier, VT 05602, or by e-mailing Biwarriors@aol.com.

NE Regional Meeting Notes:

Some ideas for how members wanted to be served by BiNet USA came up at the meeting. They include:

- 1) Get and staff a 1-800 number for people to call for info/support/contacts
- 2) Let members know what's happening nationally more often
- 3) Call/contact members more often and more quickly when they first join
- 4) Provide a presence politically and

actively (which BiNet USA has been doing, but the Regional organizers think we need to convey more and more Often to the members)

5) Create a membership monthly e-mail letter that can do the above mentioned things, and consider having e-mail parties so that members without e-mail can view these e-mails

6) Hold more official gatherings.

There are groups meeting in all five states on a regular or pseudo-regular basis.

For information, please call/write or e-mail: BiNet, Kim Ward,
45 State St, Montpelier, VT 05602
(802)229-0112
Biwarriors@aol.com

MidAtlantic Region: Our retreat this year was a great success and a lot of fun. A great deal of work went into making it so, and we owe a lot of thanks to all the folks who pitched-in.

After an opening celebration, Friday night, we had a bonfire under the stars. Some found this to be their favorite part of the whole weekend, I'm told. Of course, marshmallows were roasted and turned into s-mores.

The theme for the Retreat was "Living Outside the Box." Many of the activities coordinated well with the theme. Most of the workshops were held on Saturday. Saturday morning workshop subjects included:

- Outside the Box of Gender,
- Outside the Box of Body Image,
- Outside the Box of Religion,
- Outside the Box of Polyamory: Creating Bi-affirming Monogamy,
- Outside the Box of Femme/Butch.

After lunch Saturday, there were more workshops: Living outside the Box of the Intellectual, Massage, Singing, and Ritual.

Many of us went to the River to enjoy some skinny-dipping. Others chose to try the pool and pressure-tested the young lifeguard.

We were fortunate to find a new location with lots of space. Co-existing with the Deacons of some Episcopal diocese was a bit disconcerting, at first, but they loosened up noticeably by lunchtime Saturday. Chances are that our presence did them some good! The many rooms with comfortable chairs and the open rooms for workshops and discussions seemed pretty ideal.

The Saturday night talent show was surprisingly good. We sang, laughed at skits, and enjoyed several readings. It stood to reason that Bi people would be more talented than the average as we are in other ways as well.... The organizers arranged for a DJ and we danced in the covered pavilion after the talent show. After the dance, an informal game of "Truth or Dare" in one of the top rooms became the stuff of legends.

Sunday, was a bit more relaxed, as

some of us were a bit slow getting started. Then we had our last workshop on "Living Outside the Box of Age Expectations" before gathering for lengthy good-Bi's.

Hopefully, we will see you all again next year

Central Region: Central region is happy to welcome our new RO, Karen Unholz. We have just completed a massive project updating our contact information for nearly 150 bi and bi-inclusive groups in the region. We are currently working on our EBAH Action Plan and planning a regional retreat in Indiana in April.

For more information, contact:
Robert Morrison (robert@ais.net),
Brett Beemyn (brett_beemyn@ccmail.wiu.edu), or Karen Unholz
(plastic_fish@hotmail.com)

My First Time: Notes on the Poly Conference

Polyamory has displaced bisexuality as the leading edge issue in my life. I have been polyamorous for over six years, but I only attended my first polyamory conference in September. The conference was sponsored by the publishers of Loving More magazine (check out their web site at www.lovemore.com). Together with my lover, Vonn, and *her* lover, Mary, I traveled from Tampa, Florida to New York's Catskill Mountains for the conference. It was extraordinary! It was a very worthwhile use of time, money, and especially a precious work "vacation day."

There were about 130 people there, ranging in age from early 20's to late 70's. The conference was well organized, the retreat complex setting was ideal, and the food was delicious and abundant. The conference participants were so interesting and friendly that every mealtime conversation felt like a Paris salon, where ideas sparked. Loving More publishers Ryam Nearing, Barry Northrop, and Brett Hill, in their brief moments of facilitation, established a respectful groundedness that allowed any subsequent expressions of exuberance, sadness, fun, and disappointment to be truly heard and felt by participants.

One of the first speakers on Friday night was Loraine Hutchins, whose topic was "How Queer Feminist Multi-Cultural Values Strengthen All Our Families." The entire conference was welcoming to people of all sexual orientations. As a bisexual who formerly identified as a lesbian for 10 years, being in queer-friendly space is a joy. I don't have to wear my "educator" hat, and that feels good.

Friday night, in a room lit only by a candle, people shared what was trou-

bling or emotionally loaded for them. Silent witnesses were valued as much as speakers. We modeled for ourselves what it meant to really listen. The posturing that strangers can do in a group setting was largely absent at the conference.

On Saturday morning, Vonn, Mary, and I were among eight panelists on a poly relationships panel. I was nervous, especially since the panel was being videotaped by three Canadians who are putting together a documentary on polyamory. I felt it was important for Mary, Vonn, and I to be on the panel because we are three women. I was the only out bisexual and the only person who explicitly validated an "intimate network" style of polyamory as contrasted with a "primary/secondary" style. "It's not that I value primary relationships less, it's that I value secondary relationships more," I said.

Later I attended the "Sacred Sex Diversities: From Ancient Traditions to Modern Innovations" workshop by Loraine Hutchins and Andrew Hoerner. I had attended this same workshop by them at the International Bisexual Conference in Boston last April, and I was curious to see how it would be different at a poly conference. I was again moved by Andrew's passionate call to stop using sexual terms to express hostility.

Toward the end of the workshop, we were randomly divided into small groups and were asked to talk about our idea of a sacred sex ritual. This was a stretch for me because I had not given any prior thought to it and because these were strangers, after all. However, everyone made a good faith effort to reach beyond their comfort zones and offer a response. For me, talking about sacred sex in a public space like

the conference is a political act. It brings the values of wholeness, pleasure, and respect into public space — exactly where these values *need* to be more fully expressed.

Sunday morning I attended a workshop on "poly intimacy" by C. T. Butler. He sees intimacy as being what a relationship based on common values is all about. Sex may or may not be present as a means of communicating intimacy. I agree with him that the big jump is for people to learn to handle poly *intimacy* for themselves and for their partner(s). From there, it is a relatively small jump to learn to handle the sexual aspect of being poly.

The closing circle was held outdoors in the sunshine. We held hands and sang a simple song lead by the wonderful musician Ben Silver. The circle became a line, and then it became a spiral dance, with each of us looking briefly and deeply into the eyes of everyone else as the line of people moved past. "This is an ending. How do you do endings?" Brett Hill asked. Then we expressed appreciation, and I made a mental note to be sure to express appreciation at any future endings in my life.

Something happened to me on a subtle level while at the conference. I know nothing about chakras in general and the heart center in particular. I do know that ever since the conference, I am aware of a humming, steady, joyful, powerful feeling in my chest. Perhaps something happens when people gather together to explore loving more.

- Ann Schranz
BinetUSA Database Goddess

The first time I knew I was Bi....

(Collected at the Binet Regional Organizers Retreat, Chicago)

"My girlfriend and I were competing over the same man and decided to share him... and each other, instead. That was 1971 (Seventeen years later we're still bi-coastally in touch)"

"Reading a lesbian scene from 'Letters' magazine aloud to my then-boyfriend"

"...I fell in love with my best friend Amy in college."

"I knew when my boyfriend and I got swept up into a foursome with our best friends. He and I discovered and confirmed our bisexuality together."

"...I fell in love with my best friend in high school, reduced it to a "phase", then realized it full in college...and was PROUD of it!"

"Age 14: My best friend ad-

mitted that she was attracted to my boyfriend and I as delighted by the prospect of sharing him with her...then began to imagine sharing her too."

"When I started striking out with both sexes"

"When I felt emotions for the same gender(ed) person in college during a compromising party involving substances"

"I fell in love for the first time and she was a woman too"

"I was fifteen or sixteen and had a crush on a cutie in Seventeen magazine"

"I had a religious experience..."

"I started having sex with my brother"

"When someone asked me if I was bisexual or homosexual"

"When long-time lesbians I

knew came out and 'gave permission' that I didn't have to leave the lesbian community"

"I fell in love with a bisexual man"

"I had a crush on the girl next door (in her bathing suit for the plastic pool) AND the boy next door (I was 5)"

"When I was 11 or 12 and realized that everyone was!"

"I read Ursula LeGuinn's 'Left Hand of Darkness'"

"The first time I wanted to kiss a girl - when I was 12"

"Knew I was attracted to both sexes in Jr. High (staring at the girls in gym). Didn't put the word Bisexual on it til early 20's when I had a long term g.f."

"I was attracted to a 'woman', who was a 'man'"

For more news from the retreat, see the January 1999 Issue

When did you First "Know"?

Tells us about it, We'd like to know... Send us your story.

Submission requirements are few: 500 words, electronic text (either emailed to newsletter@binetusa.org or mailed to PO Box ,). Articles for the next newsletter are due before January 2, 1999. If you want to share your story, but miss the deadline - send it any way. There's always the Spring Issue!

Bi Bull Gossip/Quotes Michael Szymanski's Bi Bull

SCOTT CAAN... New Hollywood actor Scott Caan, son of big-screen tough guy James Caan, didn't make his father proud by getting arrested after a boozy bar brawl this past month.

Caan, 23, was arrested after a unch-up with James Alleyna in a West Hollywood bar called the Firehouse. Reports following the incident claimed Caan had gone ballistic after Alleyna attempted to hit on Caan's date. In fact, the Firehouse draws a primarily gay clientele, and the date referred to in police reports was Caan's companion, Ross Porterfield.

One witness claims Caan shouted, This is my lover - what are you doing?

Before long, fisticuffs ensued.

James Caan insists that his son likes women.

A MODEL BISEXUAL. Former "Playgirl" Man of the Year Brian Buzzini talks about his life and career, and the time he shared an apartment with "Playgirl" centerfold Mark Kleckner.

Although Buzzini is rumored to be bisexual, he says he's straight. His friends just think he is very gay-friendly, that's all. As you may know Buzzini showed up on the set of a gay porn film a couple years ago; his friend owned the house in which the movie was being shot.

BOY GEORGE . . . "We were never friends, we just fucked" Boy George About Culture

Clubber bisexual Jon Moss.

SARAH JESSICA PARKER . . . When asked to comment on her 3 boyfriends before her marriage (Robert Downey Jr, JFKjr, and Nicolas Cage) She said: One, I left when he went on parole, one disappeared and then got married out of the blue, and one became overly attracted to my best male friend.

ANDY DICK

SALON, September 22, 1998
YOU DON'T KNOW DICK (excerpt)

Harriete Surovell talks with "NewsRadio" star Andy Dick Are you sensitive about your bisexuality?

It makes other people sensitive. Straight people say, "C'mon, you know you're just gay," and gay people say, "C'mon, you know you're just gay," and everybody just wants to make me gay! There is such a thing as bisexual. People want black and white.

And I enjoy being bisexual. I enjoy being with men and I enjoy being with women, but tonight I will be with one of each and I'll be on the outside on the sidelines watching, having fun.

Something happened to me sexually when I was a child that tweaked my reality.

Do you think your sexuality is related to what you have called your abusive childhood?

My parents just neglected me, I wasn't abused or anything. Ne-

glect is a form of abuse. I was being neglected, not taught etiquette or proper things like what's appropriate, and no boundaries were drawn.

SALON: After having sex in her late teens with both men and women, Sallie Tisdale writes in Salon magazine, "I spent about 10 years wondering what the hell was wrong with me. One word: bisexual." Referring to the recent spate of "recruit and cure" ads, Tisdale says, "I do, in fact, believe it's possible for a person to spend years in sexual relations with people of one gender and then find true happiness in the other. What I find sad is how many times people feel they need to either repudiate the past or deny the present."

The mainstream media "lately has accepted and used the phrase 'converted gays' as if it were a statement of fact," she writes. Newsweek devoted a recent cover story to the conversion movement without using the word 'bisexual' once. I believe it is bisexuality that allows any so-called conversion - or recruiting - to take place, because what is happening is only the awakening of something dormant in many people."

- excerpted from Michael Szymanski Bi Bull September Media Report

Bi Bull is archived at <http://www.binetusa.org/activist/media.html>

Sheppard Tribute (cont'd)

(continued from page 9)

against ignorance, which is literally killing our people. And amidst this crisis, segments of our country perpetuate a process

of collective denial by refusing to acknowledge the mere existence of this war in its attempts to silence us. But silent we are not, and silent we will never be again.

There is an old tradition in our western states of ranchers killing a coyote and tying it to a fence to scare off other coyotes, and to keep them from coming out of their hiding places. That's what Matthew Shepard's killers did to him. They smashed his skull and tied him to a fence as if he were a lifeless scarecrow, where he was bound for over 18 hours in near freezing temperatures. The message to the rest of us from these killers is quite clear: stay locked away in your suffocating and dank closets, and don't ever come out.

But the good news that I alluded to earlier is that no amount of intimidation will ever lock us away again. Lesbians, gay males, bisexuals, transgender people, and our loving and supportive heterosexual allies are coming out in greater numbers than ever before, as witnessed in the large outpouring of grief, anger, and love over this past week. As marginalized people, we are pushing the boundaries unwilling any longer to accept the repressive status quo. In coalition with other disenfranchised groups and allies, we are refusing to buckle under and to assimilate into a corrupt and corrupting system that forces people to relinquish their integrity and their humanity.

One year before the death of another of our slain leaders, gay San Francisco City Supervisor Harvey Milk recorded a will that was to be played in the event of his assassination. In it he stated that he never considered himself simply as a candidate for public office, but rather, always considered himself as part of a movement: a liberation movement for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people -- and a libera-

Binet News is currently looking for people who are interested in getting more involved in the BiNet News quarterly newsletter. We are seeking people for the following volunteer positions. All newsletter participants must be members of BiNet USA.

Interested volunteers should contact Wendy Curry at <wendyc@binetusa.org>.

Regional News Editor: The Regional News Editor is responsible for working with the Regional Organizers to gather local and regional news and get it ready to include in the quarterly newsletter. Must be able to gather information by both e-mail and phone.

Columnists: People who are interested in writing a quarterly column on a topic of special and/or ongoing interest. Suggestions as to possible topics include Youth, Aging, Rural Issues, Book Reviews, Spirituality, Political News, Queer Community News, Health, etc.

Writers: People interested in contributing to the newsletter on a regular or occasional basis on topics of interest to bisexuals.

Advertising/Sales: We would like for the newsletter to be able to offset some of its cost with ads of interest to bisexuals (books, services, conferences and meetings). This person would solicit and edit ads for publication.

Graphic Arts Editor: The Graphic Arts Editor is responsible for the graphical content of the magazine: Collecting art/photographs, dealing with copyright issues, soliciting original art.

tion movement for all people.

Each time Harvey spoke in front of a crowd, he urged people to come out everywhere and often: "Tell you immediate family," he would say, "tell friends, neighbors, people in the stores you shop in, cab drivers, everyone." And he urged heterosexual people to be our allies, to interrupt derogatory remarks and jokes, to support us and offer aid when needed. If we all did this, he said, we could change the world.

Well, in his brief time with us, Matthew Shepard also changed lives.

His caring soul transformed the people he met. Though his attackers may have succeeded in devastating his body, they did not and will never succeed in destroying his gentle spirit, or in extinguishing the heart of a community and a movement for social justice, for Matthew's spirit continues, inspiring a people, a nation, a world.

We can take solace in the words of Judy Shepard, Matt's mother, when she

tells us: "Go home, give your kids [and I would add, all your loved ones] a hug, and don't let a day go by without telling them you love them."

For Matthew, and Judy, and for all of us, I do believe that love WILL conquer the hatred. Matthew, thank you for the riches you have left us. We will continue the struggle in your name to make the world a safer and more supportive environment for all its people. Matthew, may you forever rest in peace.

- Warren Blumenfeld, gay writer/teacher who has been a friend of bisexuals for years.

Toward a new national discussion of sexual orientation.



If you really love someone, you'll tell them the truth.

The Christian Coalition, Family Research Council, Concerned Women for America, and the American Family Association (partial list) used this slogan in recently published anti-gay ads claiming to have cured homosexuals of their behavior. The ensuing debates on morality, genetics or unlearning behavior all miss an important point — we have the right to love whomever we choose. The truth is, human sexuality is far more rich and multifaceted than we're taught to believe. The truth is that neither science, nor politics, nor religion can yet define the genesis of sexual orientation. Most likely each of us is a complex mix of nature and nurture.

The truth is, many people are bisexual.

Bisexual people have the capacity for emotional, romantic, loving and/or physical attraction to more than one gender. Some of these so-called ex-gays are undoubtedly bisexual. Bisexuals can choose to be open to the full range of possibilities, but our bisexuality is the potential, not the requirement, for involvement with more than one gender. Some bisexual people choose to be in committed monogamous relationships; some choose other forms of relationships and commitments. Heterosexual and homosexual people also make these choices.

Bisexuals come from all cultures, all religious and spiritual beliefs, all sizes and abilities, all social strata and walks of life. Some of us are just like you. Some of us are nothing like you. But we are bound together by one important factor: we believe in the freedom to love whom we choose.

The truth is, love is about honor and respect for yourself and others.

The truth is, these ads sow hatred and intolerance. These organizations are seeking to define sexuality, gender, and family solely in their own image. It is an offense to the human spirit for any group to impose their beliefs as the one true way and to tell people to reject and hate themselves and each other because they do not fit a certain mold. That is not love.

Love, between people who care for each other regardless of the genders involved, is an important family value that strengthens our society and enriches all our lives. Love is an essential part of life and a celebration of the human spirit. The truth is that the families we create, in whatever form, are precious and entitled to respect and to equal protection under the law.

The truth is, love makes a family.

As human beings we are born with the right and ability to love, to change and to choose as we grow. We must all have the option to choose to get married or not. We must all have the right to have and to raise children or not. All our relationships and families must be equally valued. We must have the right to walk down the street holding hands without the threat of violence. We must have the right to live, to work and love without fear of discrimination of any sort. We must have the right to make our own moral and ethical decisions based on our own personal integrity.

THE TRUTH IS, ALL OF US — BISEXUAL, LESBIAN, GAY, TRANSGENDER, HETEROSEXUAL — DESERVE THE RIGHT TO LOVE WHOM WE CHOOSE.

In the public interest, this message has been sponsored by the following organizations (partial list), representing the views of millions of Americans.

Anything That Moves magazine
www.anythingthatmoves.com

BiNetUSA
www.binetusa.org

Bisexual Resource Center
www.biresource.org

Children of Lesbians & Gays Everywhere
(415) 861-5437

FTM International
ftmgen@best.com

Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund
victoryf@aol.com

Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans of
America, Inc.
www.glbva.org

Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network
www.glsen.org

Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation
www.glaad.org

GenderPAC
www.Gpac.org

International Gay & Lesbian
Human Rights Commission
www.iglhrc.org

Intersex Society of North America
www.isna.org

LLEGO: The Nat'l Latina/o Lesbian, Gay,
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AquiLGBT@LLEGO.ORG

Nat'l Black Lesbian & Gay Leadership Forum
NBLGLF@aol.com

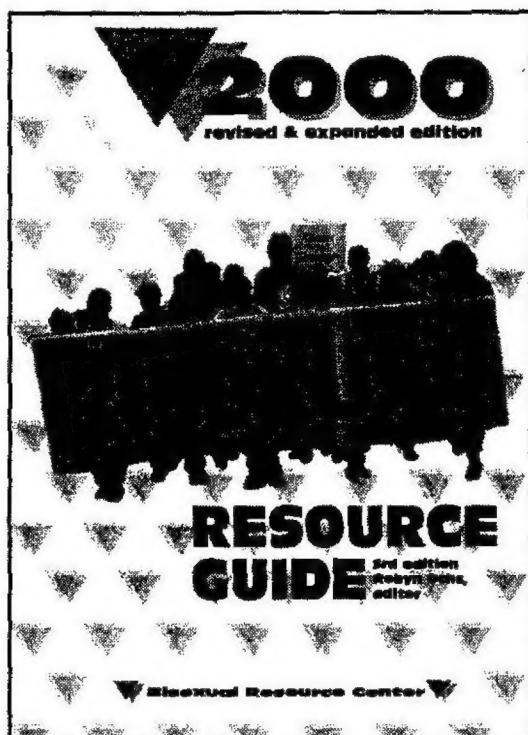
Nat'l Center for Lesbian Rights
info@NCLRights.org

Nat'l Gay & Lesbian Task Force
www.nglftf.org

Nat'l Youth Advocacy Coalition
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Now here's more good news. We want to offer BiNet members a special pre-publication discount price. If you order by January 15th, your cost will be only \$9.95 — that's two George Washingtons off the regular price of \$11.95 — at a savings of 16.74%! And, if you order two or more copies, we'll include a FREE Bi Pride Bumpersticker (as seen on our BRC website).

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